

For Immediate Release  
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## **DCR OFFERING GRANT ASSISTANCE TO RURAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS**

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is accepting applications for the latest round of Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Grants. Up to \$2,000 is available to non-profit rural or call/volunteer fire departments that provide service to communities with a population of 10,000 or less. Eligible fire departments must be made up of at least 80% call/volunteer firefighters and be recognized as a department under state law.

“We encourage every eligible fire department in Massachusetts to take advantage of this grant opportunity since this program is clearly intended to offer assistance to as many small town fire departments as possible,” said Steven R. Pritchard, acting DCR Commissioner.

Last year, 45 Massachusetts towns were awarded \$60,930 in VFA Grants. This year, the following amounts are available:

- \$27,195 under Cooperative Fire Protection (CFP). To be eligible, projects under CFP must be within the categories of firefighter safety, technology transfer and rural fire defense.
- \$30,030 under the National Fire Plan (NFP) “Communities at Risk.” Projects under NFP will be awarded based on the following priorities: (1) high risk communities adjacent to federal lands (2) communities working in partnership with federal firefighting agencies in responding to wildland fires (3) high risk communities within the state, not associated with federal lands.

Communities may apply for either (or both) of these programs. Funding for this program, which began in 1977, is provided by the United States Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, but is administered by DCR.

For more information, see: [www.mass.gov/dem/programs/firecont/3fireser.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dem/programs/firecont/3fireser.htm), or call the Bureau of Forest Fire Control: (413) 538-9092. Completed applications must be received by May 6, 2005.

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